

Mineral oil hydrocarbons in food

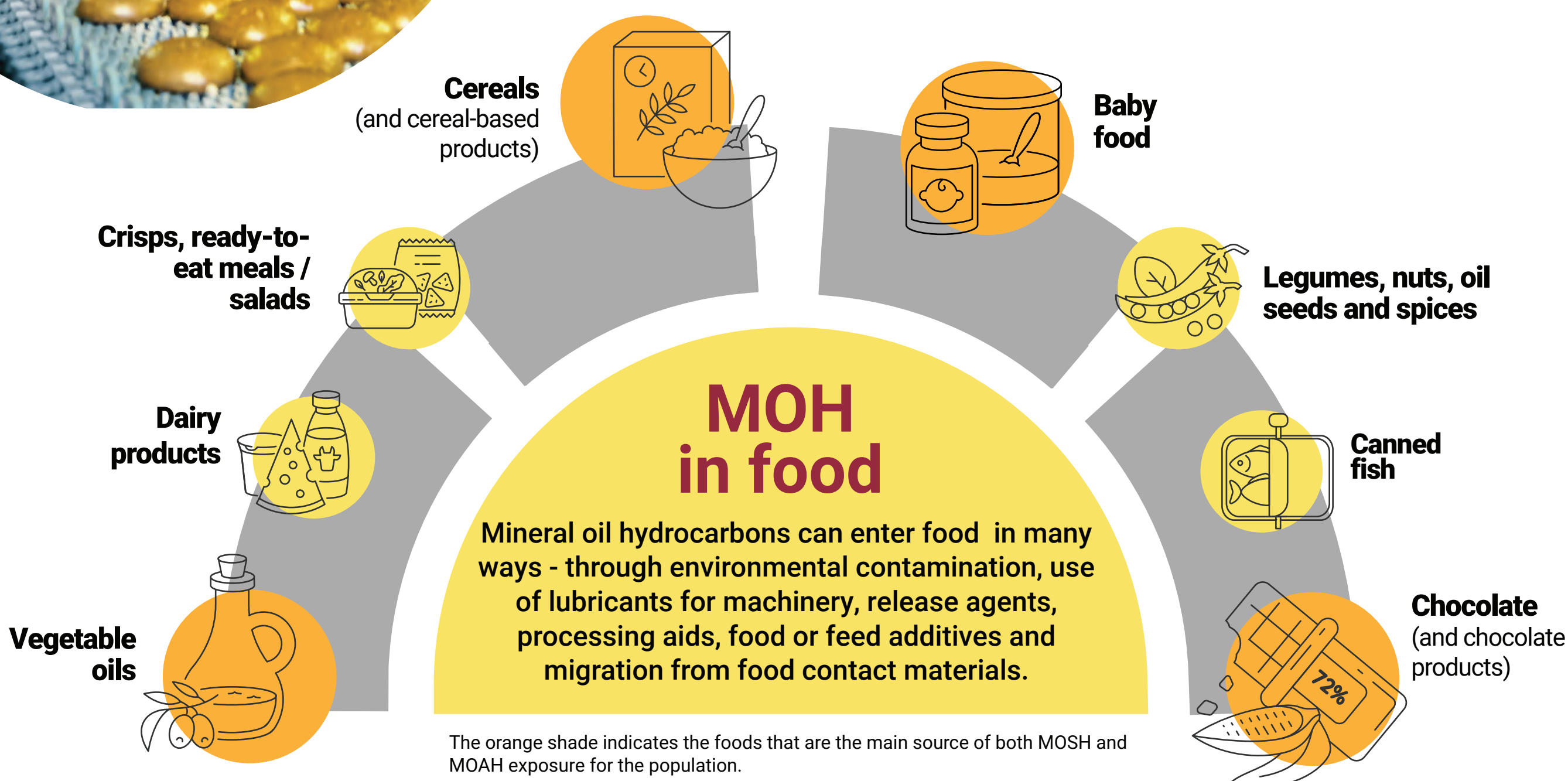


What are mineral oil hydrocarbons?

Mineral oil hydrocarbons (MOH) are a diverse group of chemical compounds mainly derived from petroleum distillation and refining.

They are divided into two main categories based on their chemical structure:

- Mineral oil saturated hydrocarbons (MOSH)
- Mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons (MOAH)



Health impact

The potential human health impact of MOH varies widely. MOSH, which are known to accumulate in the liver and lymphoid system, do not present a public health risk at current levels of dietary exposure. One type of MOAH may contain genotoxic substances that can damage DNA in cells and may cause cancer. For substances such as these, a safe level cannot be established.

EU in action

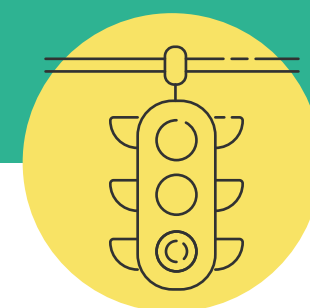
In the EU system, different actors work closely to protect public health by assessing and managing risks as well as monitoring the presence of MOH in our food.



EFSA assesses the risks for humans posed by MOH throughout the food chain. Data on their presence in food is gathered through continuous data collection.



EU regulations require Member States to monitor MOH presence in food following the guidance provided by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.



The European Commission and Member States consider EFSA's work for risk management actions.



www.efsa.europa.eu

EFSA is the EU risk assessment body for food and feed safety. In close collaboration with national authorities and in open consultation with its stakeholders, EFSA provides independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks.

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